

June 27, 1969

Dr. Carl-Göran Hedén  
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My dear Hedén,

Some weeks ago I had occasion to mention the forthcoming Nobel XIV Symposium to some of my friends at the Washington Post. I also indicated to them the particular plans that had been outlined in the preliminary announcements for press coverage of the event.

In due course I received the enclosed comment from Mr. Alfred Friendly who is an important executive as well as an excellent columnist of the Post. I think his letter does raise an important point that deserves your earnest consideration. Plainly the useful impact of the symposium will depend very much on the way in which it is dealt with in the press and I think this aspect of your planning deserves the most earnest consideration. One of the best things that you could do might be to communicate directly with Mr. Friendly and get his own opinions as to the most effective way of managing the press arrangements for maximum benefit. This is not to say that you would have to follow his recommendations but I think you would profit from hearing the views from someone with a great deal of experience in such matters and furthermore a man who would be entirely sympathetic with the other concerns that you have in managing the symposium. You do, of course, have an obligation to the participants to protect the privacy of their more informal remarks so that they can speak more freely without fear that every incautious word might be broadcast before they have the opportunity for careful deliberation and critical dialogue.

In any case, I think it would be very useful to get a full picture of how these arrangements do look from the point of view of the working press whose actual coverage of the symposium will be so important for its ultimate success.

Sincerely yours,

Joshua Lederberg  
Professor of Genetics

Enclosure  
JL/rr